

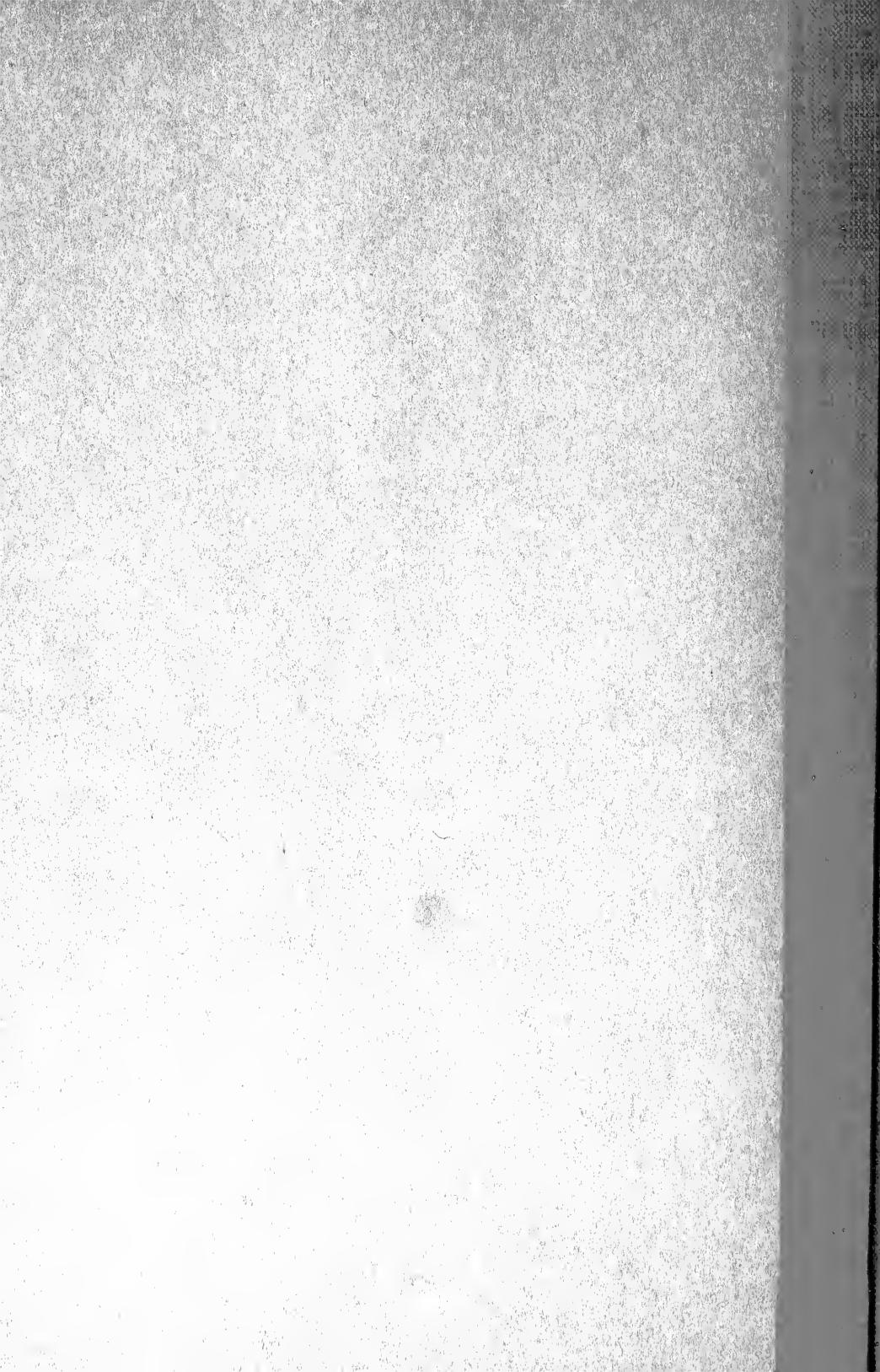


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THE JEWISH CHAUTAUQUA SOCIETY
AND THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

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1. Rural Life Bulletin—The Country Church
2. Virginia High School Quarterly—Published in November, February, May and August
3. Virginia High School Literary and Athletic League—Debate—Part I. Organization, Parliamentary Forms and Rules. Part II. Arguments and References
4. Virginia High School Literary and Athletic League—Debate—Woman's Suffrage
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6. Extension Series, Vol. I, No. 2—University Extension Lectures
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9. Extension Series, Vol. I, No. 5—Program for the use of Sunday Schools and Churches in the observance of Country Church Day
10. Extension Series, Vol. I, No. 6—Announcement of the Curry Memorial School of Education
11. Extension Series, Vol. I, No. 7—Program of the Ninth Annual Rural Life Conference, University of Virginia Summer School, July 17 to 21, 1916
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BUREAU OF EXTENSION,
Charles G. Maplis, Chairman
University, Virginia

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The Jewish Chautauqua Society and the University of Virginia*

By CHAS. G. MAPHIS,

Professor of Secondary Education, University of Virginia.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

In looking over the program of this meeting and noting that all of the speakers except myself are Jews, and observing the same fact about my audience, I am reminded of a story which Superintendent Joyner of North Carolina told in an address of welcome to the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools recently held at Durham, North Carolina.

He related that when Durham was a very small village some twenty years ago, General Carr, who lived at Durham but was Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, employed as his butler an old colored man who for a number of years had been janitor of one of the college buildings at the University.

When the old man's year of service was up General Carr was much surprised to have him come and report that he was going to leave and go back to his old job as janitor at Chapel Hill, and said to him, "Uncle John, haven't I paid you well and treated you properly?" "Yes, sah," was the reply, "you has treated me well, but I'se gwine back. I likes you very well, but I has done concluded that Durham's no place for a literary man."

For not a single moment have I had a feeling that I am out of place here. The cordial invitation to come, the hearty and genuine reception which I have received since arriving, and the reassuring words of your chairman, all combine to make me feel that I am not out of place.

I desire, Mr. Chairman, to express my appreciation of the

*An address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Society held at New Orleans, December 27, 1916.

honor conferred upon me in the invitation to address you and my genuine pleasure in bringing to you greetings from the University of Virginia in whose Summer Session three of your distinguished members have lectured so acceptably.

In 1914 your lecturer was Rabbi Abram Simon, Head of the Washington Hebrew Congregation, and member of your Correspondence School.

Dr. Simon, by his fine social qualities, his geniality, his broad-mindedness, his scholarship, his cleverness and his oratorical powers, quickly became popular, not only amongst the students of the Summer School but with members of the University community, the faculty, and the protestant clergymen of the city.

He lectured on the History of Jewish Education and Culture in the Biblical Era, Jewish Educators in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance of Jewish Education, and Modern Jewish Problems in Education.

His lectures grew in popularity from day to day, and it is not too extravagant praise to say that, although we have had many eminent lecturers, we have had no other whose lectures have been more popular and have created a more genuine interest.

In 1914, Rabbi Harry W. Ettelson, of Hartford, Connecticut, was the lecturer, his subject being Literary and Moral Interpretation of the Psalms. He was a worthy successor to Dr. Simon. He was an enthusiastic student of literature, afire with literary appreciation. He, himself, being the author of some excellent translations of your brilliant Yiddish Poet, Morris Rosenfeld.

In 1915, we had the pleasure and honor of having with us Dr. Max L. Margolis—a man of different type from those who had preceded him; quiet, reserved, dignified, erudite, essentially a teacher. This Semitic scholar gave a series of lectures on the story of the Origin and Transmission of the Hebrew Scriptures which were at once interesting, instructive and illuminating. During our Rural Life Conference, which that year was devoted to the rural church and was attended principally by protestant ministers, a lecture each day by Dr. Margolis formed part of the program.

I heard many words of commendation from them and frequent expressions of appreciation.

Last year, to our great delight, Dr. Simon returned to us. His stay was all too brief, which created in us a feeling of disappointment akin to the short-lived pleasure of the old colored man in Charlottesville on Saturday before Christmas.

Virginia became a prohibition State on November first under a rather rigid law. Provision is made, however, that each adult who is a head of a family, and proves that he has not in the past twelve months been intoxicated, may have shipped to him a maximum of one quart of whiskey a month. This old darkey had waited to get his allotment so that he might have a real Christmas. He got it from the express office and was carrying it along the street when the bottle dropped upon the pavement and broke, wasting the precious liquid. To a passer-by, the old negro looked up in great disappointment and said mournfully, "Good Lord, Marse John, Christmas 'done come and gone."

I think it was Dr. Simon himself who charged, in an address before your Society, "we are not doing anything to bring the non-Jewish world to recognize our truths and principles." Certainly this charge could not be wholly true after such a series of lectures as those which we have had at the University of Virginia Summer School. No more effective means of giving proper publicity to your tenets could in my opinion be employed. The Carnegie Peace Foundation has adopted a similar plan and now supplies lecturers on International Conciliation and Polity.

If, "to foster your historic consciousness and to disseminate your history and literature" is your task, as one of your number has expressed it, then no better means, in my judgment, can be employed, and we are looking forward to a continuation of the custom with pleasure and hope.

As Thomas Jefferson looked to universal education for the amelioration of all of our political ills, so the Jews, if they expect the large number of immigrants to become a blessing to the people of this country of whom they are to become an integral part, must provide instruction for them. Modern Jewish education is synonymous with moral and religious education and

therein it lays emphasis where Jefferson would have had it placed. The strongest side of Jefferson's educational philosophy was its bearing upon good morals and social progress. "Education," he said, "generates habits of application, of order, and the love of virtue; and controls by the force of habit, any innate obliquities in our moral organization."

THE SEMITIC NATIONS.

Kemp, in his History of Education, says, "One important chapter in the history of education has not yet been written. A very interesting one it no doubt would be. It is the history of the old Semitic Kingdoms of Babylon and Assyria.

"More directly interesting than the old Semitic peoples are the Hebrews. The development of Hebrew Nationality and the maintenance of Hebrew racial characteristics and eminence are the miracles of history.

"The Hebrew religion was the one definitely monotheistic and strictly ethical religion of antiquity, and through Christianity it has given inspiration and character to nearly all that is noblest and purest in the highest types of modern civilization."

From the Encyclopaedia of Education I gather the following brief statement of the early history of Jewish Education.

The Jews, long before any other nation of antiquity, formulated an educational ideal and expressed the aim of education in terms of character-formation, based on religious and ethical principles. The product of a sound education was to be a God-fearing man for, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Schools were unknown, for it was felt that the education of the children was the business of the family.

The Book of Proverbs is the expression of the educational ideals of the time and was typical of the literature of the ancient period. According to Josephus, it is interesting to note that about 30 A. D. the High Priest, Joshua ben Gamla, passed a law providing for the establishment of elementary schools, with compulsory attendance from the age of six. By this law each community had to provide a teacher for every twenty-five

children, with an assistant if the number rose to forty, and another teacher if the number reached fifty.

One of the most interesting illustrations of the influence of education on the survival of a nation is that presented by the survival of the academies established after the destruction of the temple. An interesting institution connected with the Babylonian academies was the *Kallah*, a general assembly meeting twice each year, at the end of summer and winter, not unlike the modern chautauquas or institutes, of which this meeting is an example. The theory of education in the nine centuries following the Old Testament period is found in the Talmud—Education, meaning as always, religious education, was regarded as the business of life.

Note carefully the following statement of aims, compare them with Jefferson's and see how modern they seem. The ignorant man was to suffer civil disfranchisement and social ostracism, for the ignorant man cannot be religious while "whoso knows the Bible, *Mishnah*, and morals will not sin easily." Hence a school was as much a requisite in every community as a synagogue, and to live where there was no school was forbidden. The teacher was to be married, not young, patient, and wholly devoted to the needs of his pupils. The reverence with which teachers were regarded is reflected in their titles, "Lights of Israel," "Princes of the People," "Pillars of Israel," etc.

In the middle ages, it became a matter of distinction for wealthy men to maintain academies at their own expense, as it was also to possess a library and to be willing to lend books. The spread of knowledge by lending books willingly is repeatedly recommended as an act of piety. I make these quotations in a measure to refute the charge which is made that our histories of Education make no reference to Jewish Education. The problem of purely Jewish education is becoming more and more complex in proportion as the facilities for secular education increase. The decay of the home, the early economic independence, the weakened hold of the synagogue, the so-called attractions of the street, contain in them the causes of many a tragedy. The Congregational School attempts now, I believe, to offset

these adverse influences, but with varying success—leaders and teachers seem to be lacking.

Your Chautauqua lectures are a means of acquainting the Non-Jewish world with the truths and principles of Judaism. I have referred to the lectures and their popularity at the University of Virginia.

In my brief reading and study of this subject I have learned much which I did not know about Judaism, and much which I knew has been emphasized in a new light.

I have learned, for example, that there are good Jews and bad Jews; some irreligious Jews, but more devout Jews; cultured Jews and vulgar Jews; liberal, generous Jews and greedy, grasping Jews—just as all these classes exist amongst the Gentiles. I have learned, too, that it is not fair to judge the worst of one class of people by the best of another, as many of us are prone to do. I have also learned that human nature is much the same in all ages, and that we are likely to render the harshest judgment against people and things about which we know least, just as Shakespeare, who probably never saw a Jew, portrayed his Shylock as a type which has been accepted ever since. I have learned that you have your Shylocks in trade, your Fagins and Svengalis in crime, and your Isaacs of York; you also have your Rebekas and your Daniel Derondas; your Mary Antins Heines, Metchnikofs and Zangwills; you have also your Steinthals, Spinozas, Bergsons, in Philosophy; your Mendehlsohns, Meyerheers, Rubenstein, Benjamins, in music; your D'Israelis, Straussers, Brandeises, in statesmanship; your Max Hardens, Wises, Gompers, as Social Leaders; your Blochs, in Psychology; your Pulitzer, and Seligmans as Publicists; your Rothschilds, Schiffs and Seligmans in Finance; your Belascos, Frohmans, Bernhardts, Erlangers, in Theatricals. It is, therefore, not just to nationalize the traits of a Shylock or a Fagin without at the same time nationalizing the nobler characters.

Mark Twain, who once wrote some sneering things about Jews, became better informed, repented, and afterwards wrote the following: "If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one per cent. of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of stardust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly the Jew

ERRATA

Page 128, line 23, there should be a comma after "Antins".

line 24, "Metchnikof" should be Metchnikoff.

line 26, "Benjamins" should immediately precede "D'Israelis".

line 28, "Medicine" should be substituted for "Psychology".

ought hardly to be heard of; but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and abstruse learning are also away out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvellous fight in this world, in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself, and be excused for it. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian arose, filled the planet with sound and splendour, then faded to dreamstuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other people have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakenings of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?"

I have learned that while long oppression, limited fields of opportunity, and other causes, for which the Christians are as much responsible as the Jews, have developed certain undesirable traits in some individuals and classes of the sect, yet there are outstanding characteristics of excellence which render them insignificant in comparison; such as, longevity due to a more rigid observance of the sanitary code handed down from Leviticus, which is the basis of practically all of our modern laws of sanitation and preventive medicine. There is consequently a low death rate amongst them, alcholism and certain other vices are less common, they are law-abiding people, they do not occupy almshouses, seldom divorce, are very domestic; no other race has given such careful home training to its children from the earliest time to the present, they are unknown to the Potter's Field; and above all the Jew is religious. One important lesson, above all, Jewish education has taught us; namely, that the most important element in all education is

moral discipline. Jewish education down to comparatively recent times meant education in general both religious and secular. Today it means purely religious education. Judaism insists on social righteousness and social control.

Jefferson's University salutes the representatives of your Society assembled here, and bids you God speed in your great task of disseminating knowledge and carrying truth to those who, without your efforts, would remain ignorant. "Educate and inform the whole mass of the people," said he, "no other sure foundation can be devised for the preservation of freedom and happiness." "I look to the diffusion of light and education as the resource most to be relied on for ameliorating the condition, promoting the virtue, and advancing the happiness of man."

If I understand your aims aright, Jefferson has expressed them aptly and accurately in the phrases "diffusion of light," "ameliorating the condition," "promoting the virtue," and "advancing the happiness." Your Rabbis but state the same truth when they say "Upon three pillars rests the world—Truth, Justice and Peace."

Your Chautauqua Society I interpret to be a Jewish Cultural Agency, the object of which is to further in a large sense the work of Jewish education by lectures, by correspondence, by study circles, and by all the means employed by a well organized University Extension Department,—which is the organized and systematic effort to bring some of the advantages for culture and instruction within the University to people who are not enrolled as resident students. A university should not only discover truth, but should disseminate truth. Your Society is an agency for the dissemination of the knowledge which its leaders and teachers have discovered or otherwise obtained from organized institutions of learning, by carrying it out to men and women everywhere and applying it in creative helpfulness—thus holding open the door of educational hope to thousands who cannot attend regular school or college sessions. Information alone leads to intelligent thinking and sane acting. Opinions to be valuable must be based on facts. When they are not, they are vicious and harmful.

But I have departed from a consideration of Jefferson and the University to state briefly my interpretation of your aims.

On the façade of one of the new main buildings in the quadrangle at the University is this quotation from the Gospel of St. John, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

The University has always been distinguished for its emphasis of truth and honor and to these another attribute is being added—service. In a letter just sent out to all of her alumni, President Alderman uses these words: "The University of Virginia is the first deliberate gift of democratic education to a nation. Her three-fold destiny lies before her like a clear and shining faith—to conserve truth, to advance knowledge, to draw near to her people in sympathy and guidance."

Jefferson, in writing to Mr. Roscoe said, "This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it."

On the western slope of Monticello Mountain overlooking the University, there stands a small and modest obelisk on which is inscribed

"Here was buried Thomas Jefferson
Author of
The Declaration of American Independence;
The Statute of Virginia for
Religious Freedom;
And
Father of the University of Virginia."

This epitaph, as is well known, was written by himself and recites the things for which he most wished to be remembered. The achievements there recorded justly entitle him to be called the "great apostle of freedom," for when Jefferson penned that immortal document, the Declaration of American Independence, he prepared the way to set all Americans politically free; when he wrote and had enacted into law the statute of Virginia for religious freedom, he established the principle which set all Americans religiously free; and when he founded the University of Virginia, he established an institution to set men intellectually free, and established the principle, not before universally

conceded, of intellectual liberty. I frequently wonder whether we today appreciate fully the spirit and the idealism and humility of the man who, although an extreme individualist, was almost inspired with the desire for what we now term social service, and who exemplified so fully the cardinal principle of democracy and religion—the brotherhood of man.

If it should be given to any of you, my friends, as it was given to him, to be a distinguished lawyer, a member of the Virginia Legislature and the Continental Congress, Governor of Virginia, Minister to France, Secretary of State, President of the United States, and to have in addition every public honor that a grateful people could bestow upon you, and you were permitted to dictate your own epitaph, would you not be tempted at least to record some mention of them?

In my judgment the greatest moment of his great life was when he wrote those words and the noblest element of his character are found in this epitaph.

Sir Christopher Wren built as his monument St. Paul's Cathedral; the monarchs of Egypt sought to perpetuate their memory in the Pyramids; Napoleon, his, by attempting to establish an empire; modern philanthropists seek theirs by endowing institutions; but Jefferson built a greater than any of them and more enduring by establishing the principle of freedom and liberty in this continent and by laying the foundations of democracy for the world.

He was a man of broad vision, not a visionary, but a constructive idealist. Monticello was his Parnassus from whose heights he caught the broad vision he possessed. When, for example, he thought of freedom it was not the liberty of the individual, but of the whole nation; when he founded a university it was a complete institution such as had not been seen in this country before. Yale and Harvard had started from small beginnings and grew but the University sprung full-fledged, a complete institution from the brain of one man, like Minerva from the brain of Jove—so broad was his vision. Similarly when he thought of education it resulted in a complete system which is the model of the present day. He was so far ahead of his time in his thinking and conception of things

that he was bitterly criticised and greatly misunderstood by his contemporaries, and even in this good time we have scarcely caught up with him on many questions.

Other men had dreamed of liberty and talked of freedom. This country was peopled by men who came to escape some form of oppression, but it was left to Jefferson to put into concrete form the thoughts of the world and the dreams of the oppressed in the Declaration of Independence. This, as he tells us himself in his letters, was not a declaration of new principles but a statement which embodied all that had been written and thought and said on this subject. Locke and Milton before him had given utterance to many of the principles enunciated in the Declaration. Henry had fired the hearts of his country by his oratory in stating them, other men had disclosed them, and his task was to take them all and frame them into a political creed for the whole people—a great piece of constructive statesmanship.

Other men had written on the subject of education and had ideas concerning it, but it was left for him to construct a system, put it into operation, and to give to its function a new meaning—making it the foundationstone of a *free democratic* government. His supreme dream was a stable, republican form of government, and he did not lay aside his public duties until the principles of such a government seemed to him firmly established in this country.

Other men had fought and prayed for religious freedom, others had left their native land and had come to a new wilderness country in order that they might "worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience," only themselves to become bitterly intolerant of those who differed with them; but it was left to Jefferson to establish by constructive legislation the *principle* of religious freedom, which opened the door of hope and opportunity for the first time to the Jew, along with every other class of mankind.

While his vision was broad, and he seemed to realize much which he sought to accomplish, we may be sure he dreamed of world-wide freedom and democracy and that the truth of Browning's lines

"Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?"



was verified in his experience. I have no doubt he is now dwelling on some celestial Monticello and, paraphrasing his own words to Adams, with him, "looking down from another world on the glorious achievements of man, which add to the joys even of heaven."

I have dwelt at length, doubtless too long, on this phase of my subject, but I have done so because I believe that, on account of the very principles of his which I have tried to emphasize, no man of this or any other country has made a stronger appeal to the Jew. Oppressed, persecuted and scattered as the Jews have been in every other nation, they cannot but hail as a deliverer and benefactor the American Moses who led them into this "promised land."

In a statement prepared in 1895 directly after the fire which destroyed part of the University buildings, in an effort to raise \$20,000 to erect a memorial to Thomas Jefferson, from the Hebrews of the United States, I find the following: "In this land of liberty the gloom which for centuries overshadowed the development of the Peculiar People, has found no place. In these United States the Jew enjoys every privilege of citizenship—being in every relation of life which our government takes cognizance, the equal of any other citizen. Here he possesses unimpaired the right of life, property, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, according to the dictates of his own conscience.

"Great as are these blessings *per se*, their value is enhanced by the fact that they are not accorded as a matter of grace by a higher power, but are declared and recognized as inherent in all men. This Government has no claim upon the Jews' gratitude for favors bestowed, but it can never exhaust his loyalty and love for the justice extended, not to him exceptionally, but to all men, without excepting him.

"To the great Apostle of Liberty, who, as has been shown, declared and secured the unalienable rights upon which American civilization is based, all lovers of freedom owe an immeasurable debt; but since the Jews have profited more by his achievements than perhaps any other people, the obligation rests most heavily upon them.

"From political, religious and social degradation in Europe,

they stepped here into an atmosphere of equality and freedom, where no Governmental fetter impeded the fullest exercise of their energies. That they have improved the opportunities presented is attested by their achievements on every hand."

For the paper from which this quotation is taken, together with a number of other interesting documents consisting of letters and other papers, I am indebted to Hon. Felix H. Levy of New York, a distinguished alumnus of the University, well known of course to you on account of his great ability displayed as Special Counsel to the Department of Justice and Special Assistant to the Attorney-General of the United States.

The documents were the result of a suggestion made by Mr. Leo M. Levi, a prominent member of your Society who was graduated at the University of Virginia in 1876 and who practiced law in Galveston, Texas, until 1900, when he removed to New York City where he died in 1904 after an all too brief but brilliant career, at the age of forty-nine years. Mr. Levi was a lawyer of distinguished ability and occupied a foremost position at the bar of the South; as well as an orator and scholar of eminence. In 1896 he wrote to Mr. Felix H. Levy a letter suggesting that the efforts which were then being made by the alumni of the University throughout the United States to raise funds to restore the destroyed buildings should be availed of by the Jews of the United States as a suitable opportunity to express the admiration of the Jews of America for Thomas Jefferson as the Apostle of Religious Liberty in America. He requested Mr. Levy to obtain the coöperation of some of the important Jewish citizens of New York City, notably Hon. Oscar S. Straus (then recently United States Minister to Turkey, and since then a member of the Cabinet of President Roosevelt and more recently Progressive candidate for Governor of the State of New York, and now Chairman of the Public Service Commission of the State of New York) and Mr. Jacob H. Schiff, one of the leading Jews of the United States today. As a basis for this suggestion Mr. Levy prepared a very able exposition of some phases of Jefferson's life, particularly an interesting presentation of the services rendered by Jefferson in procuring the adoption of the Statute of Virginia for Re-

ligious Liberty, a part of which I have previously quoted. Although the project met with the approval of Mr. Oscar S. Straus, himself a Southerner, born in Georgia, who assisted in preparing a brief statement of the basis of the proposed appeal, a copy of which I have with Mr. Straus's own interlineations, together with several letters which passed between him and the Chairman of the Faculty of the University, and also was favorably received by Mr. Schiff, Mr. Warley Platzer, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, a Southerner, born in North Carolina, and other prominent Jews, it was abandoned on account of the fact that there then existed a serious financial depression which forced the gentlemen mentioned to reach the conclusion that it would not be feasible to raise the necessary funds for the purpose at that time.

You will excuse me, I am sure, for dwelling at such length and in such detail on this matter. I had not intended to do so and, in fact, had framed my address along other lines, but when I received the documents from Mr. Levy and recalled that Mr. Leo N. Levi's name is still fresh in the memory of this Southern community, and that you would doubtless remember him as one of your foremost citizens, and perhaps many of you were amongst his personal friends and co-workers, I decided that this history of the plan which he proposed and the efforts which he made on the part of the Jews of America in behalf of his Alma Mater because of the principle of truth, freedom and democracy which he had imbibed at that institution would prove more interesting to you than anything I myself might be able to present. I had intended to speak briefly of the achievements of the graduates of the University who were of the Jewish faith. Mr. Leo N. Levi perhaps was the most distinguished graduate of that faith who ever attended the University, although amongst the Jewish alumni are found the names of Felix H. Levy, to whom I have already referred, a Southerner, born in San Antonio, receiving his preparation for the University at the then noted Bellevue School in Bedford County, Virginia. He received his degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Law at the University in four years. Mr. Levy was a fra-

ternity man, a member of the Phi Kappa Sigma Chapter. He was the first president of the General Athletic Association of the University and wrote the first constitution of that Association and organized it upon its present basis. You are familiar with his distinguished career as a lawyer and publicist.

Other distinguished alumni are: Rabbi Edward N. Calisch, who attended the University for three sessions, half time in absentia, receiving his degree of M. A. in 1904 and Ph. D. in 1908. As his thesis he wrote that very valuable work "The Jew in English Literature," opening up a rich field of study which hitherto had been practically unexplored. Dr. Calisch was orator of the Class of 1908 at the 1913 reunion and delivered the Phi Beta Kappa address in 1915. In May of this year his congregation celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ministry in Richmond and he is regarded by Jew and Gentile alike one of Richmond's foremost citizens. Leon M. Nelson, a prominent attorney of Richmond, Virginia, and his brother, Roscoe Conkling Nelson, a prominent attorney of Portland, Oregon, who, while a student at the University prepared a history of the Jewish Alumni, which appeared in the "Jewish South" published in Richmond, Virginia, but unfortunately a copy was not accessible to me in preparing this paper. Maurice Hirsch, a brilliant and promising young lawyer of Houston, Texas, who was a member of the Raven Society, Phi Beta Kappa, and Delta Sigma Rho; President of Washington Society, and winner of the Orator's medal. He participated in three inter-collegiate debates against Johns Hopkins, North Carolina and Tulane and won by a unanimous decision in each debate. Louis Baum, an eminent civil engineer, now manager of the Kansas City office of the Trussed Concrete Steel Company. A. Leo Weil, distinguished lawyer and publicist, who, too, was an active member at the Washington Literary Society, being intermediate President for two years; and several years ago, by invitation, returning to deliver the annual Washington Birthday Address. There are many others, but I cannot for lack of time prolong the list.

There is another reason why I recount this history in detail, and that is that I had definitely decided to make two construc-

tive suggestions to you at the risk of appearing indelicate enough to come before you as an advocate displaying institutional selfishness, asking favors rather than using the opportunity courteously extended to me for a more academic discussion of the principles and aims of your Society. After mature consideration, however, I, myself, am convinced, and my opinion is reënforced by the favor with which the suggestion has been received by a number of prominent Jews to whom I have written, that your ends would probably be met most effectively through the adoption of the suggestion I shall make than in any other manner. If I have read your proceedings aright, trained leadership is what you most need. This is obtained only through the higher education; not that all Jews who might attend the University would adopt Chautauqua work as a profession, but they would at least catch a vision of its possibilities, become missionaries in the cause and, being filled with the spirit of the movement, would lend the weight of their influence to its wider organization and development. The suggestions which I intended to make were:

First, That your Society encourage some chapter of the Independent Order of B'nai, B'rith, or some philanthropist, to donate to the University of Virginia and other universities, following the example of Champaign and Urbanna Lodges of Illinois, the sum of \$50.00 annually to be awarded in prizes to students of the University for essays on Jewish subjects.

Second, That you consider the wisdom and feasibility of establishing at the University of Virginia a foundation for the maintenance of a Chair of Semitics wherein Hebrew and Jewish History and Literature may be taught, on somewhat the same plan as that of the John B. Cary Memorial School of Biblical History and Literature which was established some years ago by one of our Protestant denominations.

Jefferson, as you know, was opposed to formal religious teaching in the University. In a letter to Dr. Cooper he wrote, "In our University, you know, there is no professorship of divinity." But he thought that students of every sect should have access to the teachings of their respective organizations and sug-

gested that all sects be encouraged to establish on the University confines professorships of their own tenets; preserving, however, their independence of the University and of each other. He had no desire to exclude religion from any academic community but simply to introduce religious liberty.

In the minutes of the Board of Visitors, held Oct. 7, 1822, the following record is made: "In conformity with principles of the Constitution, which places all sects of religion on an equal footing, * * * they had not proposed that any professor of divinity should be appointed in the University; that provision however, was made for giving instruction in the Hebrew, Greek and Latin languages, the depositaries of the originals, and of the earliest and most respected authorities of the faith of every sect, and for courses of Ethical lectures, developing those moral obligations in which all sects agree. That, proceeding thus far, they had left at this point to every sect to take into their own hands the office of further instruction in the peculiar tenets of each.

"It was not, however, to be understood that instruction in religious opinion and duties was meant to be precluded by the public authorities, as indifferent to the interests of society. On the contrary, the relations which exist between man and his Maker, and the duties resulting from those relations, are the most interesting and important to every human being, and the most incumbent on his study and investigation."

I am prompted also, because in October, 1919 it has been definitely decided to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the founding of the University, with exercises which will be international in character, to present to you the suggestion which has been made to me in a letter quite recently received from Hon. Felix H. Levy as follows: "Permit me to offer the suggestion that if you conclude to use these papers in your address it may be that a suggestion originating either from you, or from your audience, will be in order, to the effect that the effort which in 1896 proved abortive might now, in the more prosperous condition of this country, be renewed and that an effort be made now by the Jews of America to raise a suitable fund for pre-

sentation to the University upon the basis and for the purposes suggested two decades ago by Mr. Leo N. Levi."

It would be indelicate in me to press the suggestion. I already feel some embarrassment in directing your attention to it. I simply leave it with you for your thoughtful consideration knowing that you will be moved to act upon it or not if, in your judgment, there is wisdom or unwisdom in it, and if it is in accord with your principles and would further your aims.

SUPPLEMENT

A MEMORIAL TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, FROM THE JEWS OF THE UNITED STATES.*

The recent destruction by fire of the chief buildings of the University of Virginia has suggested itself to the undersigned as presenting an occasion singularly appropriate for the exercise by the Jews of America of the philanthropy which has ever distinguished them.

The University of Virginia was founded in 1819 by Thomas Jefferson and was to him the favorite offspring of his genius. With such pride did he view his creation that he regarded it, together with his authorship of the Declaration of Independence and of the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom, as the proudest accomplishment of his career, and directed that the epitaph on his tombstone should recite these three achievements as those alone upon which his fame with posterity should rest.

For more than three-quarters of a century the University of Virginia has stood in the forefront of educational institutions in this Country; and in the South has been preëminently the leader. The buildings which have been destroyed were designed by Thomas Jefferson himself and were directed under his personal supervision.

A movement is now under way among prominent men at the North and elsewhere to raise the necessary funds to restore these buildings. In connection with this movement it has been proposed that the Jews of America unite to raise a separate fund to be presented to the University of Virginia for some designated purpose, which shall constitute a memorial to Thomas Jefferson. We believe that by this tribute to the memory of Thomas Jefferson, who with Washington and Lincoln constitute the pillars of our American commonwealth, we can most fittingly testify our

*Final draft prepared by Felix H. Levy in 1895.

loyalty to American traditions and at the same time our appreciation of the beneficial results which have flowed from Thomas Jefferson's exertions as an exponent of the doctrine of Religious Freedom.

The plan suggested is to raise a fund of \$25,000.00 to be used in the erection of a building for the Law Department of the University of Virginia, and that this building shall be designated "A Memorial to Thomas Jefferson—For the University of Virginia—From the Jews of the United States."

New York, January 15, 1896.

A MEMORIAL TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, FROM THE JEWS OF THE UNITED STATES.

On October 26th, 1895, the Rotunda and Public Hall of the University of Virginia were destroyed by fire. The Rotunda was designed by Thomas Jefferson, after the Pantheon at Rome, and it was erected under his immediate personal supervision. Under his watchful eyes the materials were prepared and placed, and by his earnest and untiring efforts the necessary funds were procured to complete the Rotunda and the other structures of the University as by him designed and founded.

Only those who will study the last years of Jefferson's life can fully appreciate how dear to him was this seat of learning, and how completely he devoted his time, fortune and talents to its upbuilding. He foresaw the important part it would play in the development of the political principles born of his genius, and in the perpetuation of the liberties which his patriotic pen had inspired the Colonists to attain by the sword.

The life of no American has been so full of great events for these United States as that of Thomas Jefferson, and no one better understood that fact than he. When, near its close, he came to review his achievements and to contemplate the place that would be assigned to him in History, he prepared his own epitaph, and rested his fame forever upon the facts therein stated.

From the burning walls of the Rotunda was borne by brave students Galt's statue of Jefferson. It bears on its pedestal the words inscribed by his own direction upon the tomb of America's profoundest statesman—

Thomas Jefferson
Author of
The Declaration of American Independence;
Of the Statute of Virginia for
Religious Freedom;
And
Father of the University of Virginia.
Born
April 2nd 1743, O. S.
Died
July 4th, 1826.

That tomb is located on the summit of Monticello, overlooking and but four miles distant from the University, which was the child of his mature thought and most unselfish efforts.

The epitaph above copied shows that Jefferson correctly appreciated his highest contributions to the well being of his country. By the Declaration of Independence he established the principle of Political Liberty; by the Statute for Religious Freedom he established by law the principle of Religious Liberty; by founding the University of Virginia he established the then contested, but now well recognized, principle of Educational Liberty.

It would be a work of supererogation to more than mention the Declaration of Independence, as the sheet anchor of political liberty and equality. On each recurring birthday of American Freedom, it is read to listening thousands, whose patriotic and answering heart-beats attest the fervor with which all Americans will support its truths with "their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor."

The Statute of Virginia for Religious Liberty is not so well known.

From the beginning to the end of the American struggle for

liberty the Colonists looked to Virginia for leadership and guidance, and such men as George Mason, Edmund Randolph, Patrick Henry, Monroe, Madison, and Jefferson, bravely assumed the weighty responsibility. On May 15th, 1776, the Virginia Convention directed her delegates in the Continental Congress, to move Independence, and on the same day appointed the Committee which on June 12th, 1776, presented the world-famous Virginia declaration of rights. This paper was written by George Mason, his work being especially aided by Patrick Henry and James Madison. In this declaration, as in the declaration of July 4th, 1776, by Congress, the principle of Religious Liberty was announced as axiomatic. Mr. Jefferson was of the opinion, however, as is shown in the 17th Chapter of his "Notes," that the declaration of June 12th, 1776, and the Virginia acts of October, 1776, repealing all Parliamentary provisions relating to Religion, left the Common Law penalties for heresy still in force. To set the matter finally at rest, Mr. Jefferson prepared, and in the beginning of the year 1786, had passed by the Virginia Assembly, "An Act for Establishing Religious Freedom." The preamble has no superior for logic and eloquence, unless it is to be found in the legislative clause which reads as follows:

"BE IT THEREFORE enacted by the General Assembly, That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

"And though we well know that this Assembly, elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, have no power to restrain the acts of succeeding Assemblies, constituted with the power equal to our own, and that therefore to declare this act irrevocable, would be of no effect in law, yet we are free to declare, and do declare, that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present or to narrow its operation, such act will be an infringement of natural right."

That Act not only remains in Virginia to this day, but following Virginia, all of the other states have enacted substantially

the same provisions; and in the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States, the principle was definitely and firmly fixed in the National Organic Law.

Mr. Jefferson, in a letter to Joseph C. Cabell dated December 18th, 1817, relative to the then proposed University of Virginia, wrote: "I have only this single anxiety in this world. It is a bantling of forty years birth and nursing, and if I can once see it on its legs, I will sing with sincerity and pleasure my *nunc dimittis*."

In a letter to the same gentleman dated January 14th, 1818, he says: "A system of general instruction which shall reach every description of our citizens, from the richest to the poorest, as it was the earliest, so will it be the latest of all the public concerns in which I shall permit myself to take an interest."

His unflagging efforts to found and maintain the University bore their first imperfect fruit when the Virginia Assembly on February 21st, 1818, appropriated \$15,000.00 per annum to that end and appointed a commission to determine the site, plan and administrative methods thereof. On August 3rd, 1818, this commission met at Rockfish Gap. Among those present as members, were the then President of the United States, Mr. Monroe, and two of his most illustrious predecessors, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. Jefferson had previously prepared an elaborate report for the Commission, which with few amendments, was adopted.

Perhaps the most notable feature of the report was his proposal "to place the entire responsibility for religious training upon an ethical basis, where all sects could agree." He was of opinion that each sect should in separate schools provide theological teaching and that theological, like other studies, should be absolutely elective. This idea aroused a storm of opposition, and for many years he was charged with having established a school of Atheism. In a letter to Dr. Cooper dated November 2nd, 1822, Jefferson writes: "In our University, you know, there is no professorship of divinity. A handle has been made of this to disseminate an idea that this is an institution, not merely of no religion, but against all religion."

Despite all opposition, Jefferson persisted in his plan to keep

religion out of the University proper, at the same time encouraging all sects to establish on the University confines "professorships of their own tenets * * * preserving however, their independence of us and of each other." His ideas were at the time regarded as fanciful, and it is almost certain that only the prestige of his great name could have made them prevail. They did prevail, however, in a modified form and in one form or another, have been adopted by nearly all the leading American Universities.

Says Professor Herbert B. Adams: "The idea of religious freedom is working itself out in university life, as it has already in the Church and in the State. The exclusion of religion is not desired by any academic community. The introduction of religious liberty is what we need. That is the idea which Jefferson attempted to realize amid great calumny and misinterpretation. And he, of all men, really solved the problem in the State of Virginia by his statute for religious liberty, and prepared the way for its solution in all university education."

The University of Virginia was regarded by Jefferson, as indeed it was, as the crowning work of his life. It was and is the enduring and eloquent monument to his patriotism and genius. Beneath the dome he designed and constructed, were placed his books annotated by his own hand and forming a priceless treasure for the student. Around it clusters all the traditions of his private life. Within its shelters the descendants of his blood have received their culture, and the flower of Southern youth have drunk at the fountains of Knowledge and Wisdom.

When the historic pile fell a prey to the flames, a cry of anguish went up from those who knew and loved it; and what is more, knew and loved what it stood for.

Unhappily, the insurance carried on the property destroyed bore no adequate ratio to the sum necessary for its restoration. Moreover, while the unanimous sentiment is that the Rotunda shall be reproduced on exactly the lines drawn by Jefferson, it is found necessary to supplement it with other buildings commensurate with the development of the University. To accomplish such results, subscriptions have been and are being solicited to a Restoration Fund. The appeal has been addressed to the



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